POULTRY

THE IMPORTANCE OF FRESH GROUND FOR CHICKS AND THE OLD STOCK AGAIN

A few weeks ago we published in this column a lengthy article regarding the importance of fresh ground in the raising of both the young and the old stock. Since the publication of that article we have seen a flock of chicks go to pieces chiefly because of this very thing on a Kent county farm, we believe. This flock reached three weeks old and then went on the downward path fast. Realizing the importance of this subject to our readers, and believing that the future of the industry in this section depends to a great extent upon the basic principles upon which the business is to be erected, we have again taken up this subject of soil contamination. In a recent issue of the "American Poultry Journal" R. S. Townsley, a well-known poultry authority, writes as follows:

"The greatest menace to the poultry industry of America is the possibility of serious epidemics of disease brought about by the weakened condition of fowls caused by soil contamination. Much of the disease which troubles poultry keepers at the present time can be directly traced to lowered vitality caused by the poisonous effects of soil that has become tainted by fowl manure, and as the poultry industry develops the menace of disease is certain to become ever greater unless poultry keepers in general awaken to the threatening danger and take the necessary steps to prevent undue contamination of the soil on which the chickens live and pick their food.

Dr. A. J. Durant, veterinarian in charge of poultry diseases, Missouri College of Agriculture, reports that a very large per cent of the fowls sent to him by people for postmortem examination are infected with intestinal parasites, which shows that they have been raised on soil that was contaminated by the influence of other birds. He states that quite a lot of the mortality among adult fowls is caused by the direct influence of tape worms, round worms and other intestinal parasites that are gotten through soil contamination and that without question the weakened condition of the fowls affected with worms paves the way for a considerable per cent of the roup and other diseases so commonly reported.

The worst cases of soil contamination might logically be expected to be found in back yard flocks and in other flocks confined to a small area, but close observers report that the unsanitary condition in the poultry yards on many large farms cannot be exceeded by any back lot poultry raiser no matter how careless he may be. In spite of the fact that general farms of 100 or 160 acres commonly keep an average of about 100 hens, it is by no means uncommon to find that poultry keeping operations on such farms are practically limited to a small lot of from one-fourth to one-half acre near the dwelling house. While in many cases the adult fowls have practically free range of the fields surrounding the homestead, it is quite commonly true that the young chicks are brooded year after year on the same small plot of ground, and the brooding yards are frequently in close proximity to the permanent laying houses where the old hens mingle freely with the growing chicks and keep the soil quite thoroughly impregnated with droppings. No matter how much range the birds may have the presence of a patch of bare ground around the poultry building is a pretty sure sign of soil that is loaded with poultry filth. As long as grass or other vegetation can be kept growing, the poultry manure will be utilized in plant growth, but whenever the soil becomes bare the droppings from the fowls quickly form a coating over the surface and become mixed with the soil by tramping so that it is wholly unfit for the use of poultry. The poultry keeper who has a small amount of land should, as the article from the American Poultry Journal makes clear, scrape off the coatings of manure or else carefully cultivate the aln dto assist in keeping it sweet, but many farm poultry keepers are so occupied with other duties that they are unable to do this, or else fail to recognize the danger of allowing it to accumulate."

The effect of a soil poisoned by the excrement of fowls is quickly apparent on young chicks and results in slow growth, uneven development, unthrifty condition, and a high rate of mortality. While the effect is not so readily noticeable on mature birds, the hens that range over tainted ground soon lose the brilliant color of their feathers and develop a sickly, unthrifty appearance. It is the nature of chickens, particularly of the growing stock, to pick up considerable quantities of earth, and those that have access only to soil loaded with poultry droppings are slowly but surely poisoned and we do not seem able to discover the cause of their death.

We are trying by this department to bring the raising of poultry to a practical basis. We realize that our poultrymen cannot cause new conditions, but, on the other hand, they must improve the conditions that already exist. They cannot turn out the young stock, the growing stock or the old stock on absolutely new ground every year. This is impractical and impossible. What they can do is this: Plant rye, rape, oats or something else in the yard where the growing stock will be put when matured or nearly matured; plant greens of some kind upon the land next fall upon which the growing stock will run next spring. Plow the land deep and make it as near new as possible. Plow and plant whenever possible.

This is a most important thing in the raising of poultry and those who intend to stay in the business should, at once, realize that they must face it and combat with in the same manner that they are compelled to fight scale and fungus diseases on the fruit trees. No matter under what condition you are raising poultry, if you will only study the thing out carefully you will find that there is some easy, practical way in which you can do this. All of us want to be successful. To do so in the poultry business we must learn to realize and take advantage of these discoveries which blaze the pathway to successful poultry culture.

FRANKLIN KEPT HIS LAURELS

Appropriately, Apostle of Thrift Was Allowed to Retain Ornaments for Exceptional Time.

New York, the Sun of that city states, is one place where there are almost laurels enough to go around. It is the custom of the city to be generous with them, but they never last. Three days is about the limit.

That is, three days marks about the length of time when the crowd will endure the sight of them on the living. After that they view them with amusement. But when hung on a bronze or marble statue by common consent and the custom of the park department they are given thirty days.

Benjamin Franklin was permitted to keep his last crop of laurels longer than most statues. Although it was by reason of his very many illustrious qualities that his statue became a landmark in Park row, it was particularly because of his position as the patron saint of all those who hold thrift as a cardinal virtue that he was adorned some weeks ago with more wreaths than any Hawaiian ever managed to hang on himself.

He kept them, too, until they were of absolutely no more use. The day they were put up people traveled from all five boroughs to gaze at the bronze likeness of the publisher of "Poor Richard's Almanac"—that first of all the best sellers of America—and to consider their own sins or to contemplate their own virtues in the matter of thrift. But this week when they were cut down no one paid the slightest attention to the two "white wings" who were climbing about the pedestal jerking down the wreaths and slinging them on the pavement.

GOT NAME FROM INDIAN CHIEF

How the City of Medicine Hat, in Canada, Acquired Its Decidedly Odd Cognomen.

Medicine Hat, the Canadian city which figures so prominently in weather reports, and which possesses undoubtedly one of the most extraordinary names of all the cities of the world, acquired its title from an old Blackfoot chief whose tepee stood on the site which is today the center of the city. He was chiefly celebrated for an amazing head-gear to which he attributed magical powers, and which he called his "medicine hat." Good fortune was supposed to attend him whenever he wore it, whether at war or on the hunt.

Once a great battle was fought between the Blackfeet and the Crees on the site of the present city. The fight went against the Crees and, just as they prepared to leave the field, a strong gust of wind caught the "medicine hat," lifted it off the head of the chieftain and deposited it in the river. This was considered an evil omen and the Blackfeet immediately fled to the mountains in great disorder.

Why a "Jumper?"

The word was originally a "jump," and is first met in 1615, as a "jacket or loose coat reaching to the thighs."

The dainty feminine garment of today owes its parentage to the shapeless garment of coarse sacking sometimes worn by coal heavers or dock laborers! For this was the original "jump," essentially a male garment of the most primitive type. Indeed, one Polar expedition records that it found the Eskimos wearing these "jumps" or loose jackets.

In the seventeen hundreds "jumps" became feminine, in the form of a kind of loose stays, chiefly worn as a sort of undress.

Then, in the eighteen hundreds, the admiralty took notice of the word as a "jumper." It is officially mentioned as one of the new "rigs" of the lower deck.

From this curious ancestry has evolved the jumper of the girls of today!

Take All But Cabin.

A very curious propensity of the wolverine is its habit of stealing and carrying away articles which can be of no possible use to it, says the American Forestry Magazine. An instance is recorded where these animals removed and concealed the whole paraphernalia of an unoccupied hunter's lodge, including such articles as guns, axes, knives, cooking vessels and blankets.

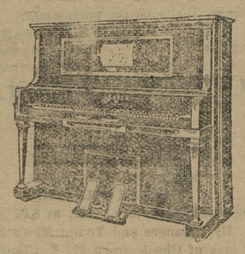
Experienced hunters and trappers claim that a big wolverine may weigh as much as 60 pounds, but that 50 pounds is the more usual weight. They are very tenacious of life and instances are on record when the animal has been shot through and through the chest and not succumbed to the wound. In such cases, of course, the heart is not penetrated.

Do What You Can.

It is the greatest of all mistakes, to do nothing because you can only do little, but there are men who are always clamoring for immediate and stupendous effects, and think that virtue and knowledge are to be increased as a tower or temple are to be increased, where the growth of its magnitude can be measured from day to day, and you cannot approach it without perceiving a fresh pillar, or admiring an added pinnacle.—Sydney Smith.

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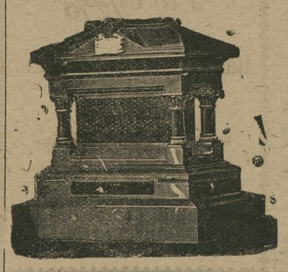
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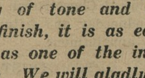


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